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selected, apparently, to substantiate his dialect hypotheses, not to show differences between scribes. Indeed, in the earlier discussion, wherein by the use of *io*, *to*, he seeks to establish that B was more faithful to his text than A, he omits, if I mistake not, the fact that A uses *io* five times, *to* three times. Neither is my list, although containing many more words, exhaustive, as I gathered it incidentally in the course of a more extended investigation. Further, as regards the leveling of *p* to *ð*, it is asserted that this has no significance, and reference is made to §199 ff. of SIEVERS' 'Old English Grammar.' SWEET agrees with SIEVERS. Nevertheless, it may be well to collect further data in view of the fact that it seems to be established, "that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the two sounds of initial *th* were already in existence as they now are, and in the same words" (F. A. BLACKBURN in the *American Journal of Philology*, vol. iii, pp. 46 ff.).

I decline to accept "The Battle of Maldon" as evidence, since WÜLKER in his 'Grundriss' says concerning it (iii, §330), "1726 druckte Hearne das Bruchstück. Bald darauf (1731) ging die Handschrift beim Brande der Cottoniana zu grunde, so dass wir jetzt auf Hearne's Druck aufgewiesen sind." In such a matter as final *p* what confidence can be placed in a copy made in 1721 and, since the MS. was burned five years later, probably never collated with the original?

CHAS. DAVIDSON.

Belmont, Cal.

PASSY'S 'LE FRANÇAIS PARLÉ.'

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES:

SIRS:—In the March issue (vol. v, p. 93) of your journal you mention PAUL PASSY'S 'Le français parlé' in a way that calls for some remarks. No one is more convinced than I that the best teaching of French pronunciation must be based on phonetic treatment and that PAUL PASSY is perfectly right in his method and principle of notation. But he has taken his ideas of practical pronunciation from the speech that prevails on the Paris boulevards instead of from that of the mass of educated people. You will undoubtedly grant that a teacher of English pronunciation who should

instruct his pupils to pronounce 'ospital and 'air instead of 'hospital and 'hair,' because he has heard this in London, would be egregiously in the wrong. Still, *mutatis mutandis*, that is exactly what PAUL PASSY is guilty of. Then what shall we say of his notation *les=lé*, which is not only contrary to usage, contrary to the prescription of every treatise on pronunciation (including the last grammar of DA COSTA recently published for the schools of the city of Paris), but even classed as something characteristic of the pronunciation of Southern Frenchmen, whose peculiarities cannot be called good French. I am sorry to find fault with the practical part of a book that under different conditions might have rendered an invaluable service.

ALPHONSE N. VAN DAELL.

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TEXT-BOOKS FOR PREPARATORY SCHOOLS.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES:

SIRS:—The new program setting forth the requirements in Modern Languages for admission to New England colleges will surely work a greatly needed improvement in the methods of teaching; the brief statement it contains will have all the power of an enactment in that direction.

The subordinate question of text-books for reading has been necessarily curtailed, yet was not left untouched. The framers of the program had many pertinent things to say on the subject. Their ideas, though not expressed for want of room, are too valuable to be lost for those whom it may concern. Here they are in a nut-shell:

Text-books for reading ought to have certain qualities: a.—They should be edited by persons who really know the languages in which the books are written; b.—Interesting, though short introductions relating to the books and the authors of them, are desirable; c.—The notes ought to be very carefully worked out, and be not only (1) explanatory, but also, (2) suggestive in every direction, (3) so framed as to quicken the powers of observation of the student, and (4) conducive to the right interpretation of the thoughts of the author.

This is an addendum to the program which,

it is hoped, will have the force of by-law; for it must be confessed that most books hitherto edited for the special purpose of giving reading matter in the modern languages are woefully wanting in the above qualities: blunders and misinterpretations are frequent; the notes are too often worked out in a slovenly way, inaccurate or irrelevant, never inviting reflection, never leading to original observation—let alone the total absence of literary interpretation, or commentary on the thoughts of the writer.

It is well known that books of any kind are primarily brought out by the publishers because it is thought there is money in them. This is as it should be; yet it seems that excellency, or, if this be unattainable, efforts to approach it in editing, will in the long run be more profitable than a short-lived interest based on local and personal considerations.

A. DE ROUGEMONT.

Chautauqua University.

BRIEF MENTION.

A second edition has appeared of GASTON PARIS' '*Littérature française au moyen âge*' (cf. MOD. LANG. NOTES iv, p. 62). The author has here turned to account all the rectifications coming from outside sources, while of his own work of revision on the book he says: "*je n'ai presque pas passé un jour sans y apporter quelque retouche, m'efforçant de le faire profiter de mes lectures ou de mes réflexions.*" The bibliographical notes, which form so valuable a feature of the manual, have been brought down to date, and a *Tableau chronologique* of French literature, from its beginning to the middle of the fourteenth century, has been appended. The importance and interest of this addition may be appreciated, when it is borne in mind that it is the first published attempt to group in chronological order the productions of the earliest period. The bulk of the work as it originally appeared has not been noticeably enlarged, but small accretions to numerous paragraphs constitute a genuine gain in completeness and accuracy.

Another work of considerable importance, in the Italian field, is the: '*Vocabolario etimologico italiano*' of FRANCESCO ZAM-

BALDI. (Città di Castello S. Lapi, 1889). This is by far the most complete treatment which the subject has yet had. The labors of DIEZ, CAIX, ASCOLI, D'OVIDIO, TEZA and the rest, have been made use of by the author and combined with detailed investigations of his own. The work fairly, if not entirely, represents the present status of this difficult and important subject. The volume is large, comprising 810 octavo pages (1440 columns, besides 90 pages of index) of particularly closely printed matter. The arrangement is admirable. Every word is treated in the group to which it belongs, which sometimes makes an article cover many pages. This however causes no difficulty, as the index (in which we have as yet discovered no omissions) indicates the page and subdivision of a page upon which any desired word is treated. This system has the advantage of showing at a glance all the derivatives or cognates of a given form. The book is exceedingly opportune and valuable; among other reasons because it brings together a vast amount of matter formerly scattered and not always controllable.

PERSONAL.

Mr. JOHN D. EPES has been called to the chair of English in Centre College (Danville, Ky.). Mr. EPES is a graduate of Randolph-Macon College (A. B. 1883); for three years after his graduation he taught English and Latin in the Wesleyan Female College (Virginia), and during the past two years he has pursued advanced courses in English, German and History at the Johns Hopkins University.

Dr. THOMAS MCCABE (cf. MOD. LANG. NOTES, vol. iv, p. 225) has been called, as Associate Professor of Romance Languages, to Byrn Mawr College, Pa.

Dr. JOHN E. MATZKE (cf. MOD. LANG. NOTES vol. iv, p. 226) has been called to the chair of Romance Languages in the University of Indiana (Bloomington).

Mr. HENRY R. LANG, who was inadvertently spoken of in the April number (col. 254) as connected with the Friends' School, Providence, R. I., is Instructor in the Swain Free School, New Bedford, Mass.